

Object agreement and locality in Hungarian

Infinitival complement clauses, second person objects and accusative adjuncts

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The paper claims that the two types of object agreement in Hungarian, definiteness agreement and the special LAK-agreement form used for the combination of first person singular subject and second person object arguments, are the result of different syntactic operations. The argumentation is based on the different distribution of the two agreement types. To diagnose the nature of the conditions for agreement we use infinitival embedded clauses, at times with multiple embedded constructions. Six different patterns are discussed showing sensitivity to locality. Definiteness agreement turns out to be more restricted than LAK-agreement. While the condition for definiteness agreement is the availability of a position where accusative case can be checked, we claim that no such condition holds for LAK-agreement.

Keywords: object agreement, definiteness agreement, infinitives, locality

1. Object agreement: Preliminaries

Hungarian verbs, besides agreeing with their subjects, also agree with their objects along two properties: definiteness and person.

In the case of definiteness agreement (DEF-agree), the finite verb agrees with its object in definiteness: the presence of a definite object triggers definiteness (also called object-) agreement on the verb, while verbs taking indefinite objects and intransitive verbs appear with the indefinite (also called subject-) agreement morpheme (Table 1).¹ The reflexive forms in the table show definite agreement due to the morphologically definite form of the reflexive pronoun: they behave as third person forms due to their etymology. An interesting split can be observed regarding pronouns: first and second person pronouns show indefinite agreement, whereas third person pronouns are definite.

1. For more details on object agreement in simple sentences see Bárány (2015).

The second form of object agreement, which we call LAK-agreement in the present paper, surfaces in the form of a special verbal suffix when we have a 1SG subject and 2nd person (singular or plural) object in the sentence.² While Bárány (2015) argues that it forms a natural part of the definite agreement paradigm, Bartos (1999) claims that it is independent of it.

If a matrix verb selects an infinitival clause, it often shows definiteness agreement with the object of its infinitival complement. To account for this, Bartos (1999) and É. Kiss (2002) argue for a long distance agreement analysis, whereas Den Dikken (2004) identifies the phenomenon as one of the clause union diagnostics. For obvious reasons, verbs that have their own objects, such as object control verbs like *küld* ‘send’ or *kényszerít* ‘force’ will be excluded from our investigation: in the presence of a local object agreement with the object of the infinitive is not possible.

One of the claims made in our paper follows Bartos in arguing that we are dealing with different syntactic processes. This argument is based on observations regarding infinitival embedding. While in the majority of cases a verb that shows definiteness agreement also shows LAK-agreement, the overlap is only partial. There are verbs that do one, but not the other, which we take as suggesting that the two types of agreement phenomena are the result of different syntactic operations.

Table 1. The Hungarian present tense object agreement paradigm

Subj	Intransitive verb <i>fut</i> ‘run’	Transitive verb: <i>lát</i> ‘see’		
		1st person or indefinite 3rd person object	2nd person object	3rd person definite object and reflexives
1SG	fut-ok	lát-ok	lát-lak	lát-om
2SG	fut-sz	lát-sz	lát-od (REFL.)	lát-od
3SG	fut-Ø	lát-Ø	lát-Ø	lát-ja
1PL	fut-unk	lát-unk	lát-unk	lát-juk
2PL	fut-tok	lát-tok	lát-játok (REFL.)	lát-játok
3PL	fut-nak	lát-nak	lát-nak	lát-ják

2. Though in principle it is possible to analyse the LAK morpheme as bimorphemic, we are not going to depart from traditional accounts in this paper and continue to consider them an unanalyzed unit.

2. The data: Six patterns of agreement

In the following examples, we present the different possible patterns of object agreement.

2.1 Transitive verbs with a DP object: [+DEF +LAK]

The verb *néz* ‘watch’ is a verb that selects an accusative direct object, but it has no infinitival complement. Both definiteness agreement (1ab) and LAK-agreement (1c) are attested as expected, with both agreement forms being obligatory.³

- (1) V + DP_{ACC}
- a. *Péter néz/*néz-i egy film-et.*
 Peter watch.INDEF/watch-DEF a film-ACC
 ‘Peter is watching a film.’
- b. *Péter *néz/néz-i a film-et.*
 Peter watch.INDEF/watch-DEF the film-ACC
 ‘Peter is watching the film.’
- c. *(Én) néz-lek/*néz-ek/*néz-em (téged).*
 I watch-LAK/watch-INDEF/watch-DEF you.ACC
 ‘I am watching you.’

2.2 Intransitive verbs with an accusative adjunct: [+DEF ?LAK]

The verb *fut* ‘run’ is an intransitive verb that selects no DP object. In spite of this, as discussed in Csirmaz (2008), it has a definite agreement paradigm as well, which surfaces when the verb *fut* takes a non-theta-marked definite accusative constituent.⁴ Due to considerations related to the meaning and the intransitivity of the verb, it is hard to draw conclusions regarding LAK-agreement. These accusative adjuncts,

3. This pattern is consistent regardless of the person and number of the subject. Thus, we use third person singular subjects throughout the work, except for the obvious cases of LAK-agreement, where we need a first person singular subject.

4. The definite agreement paradigm is also needed when the verb *fut* ‘run’ appears with a perfectivizing preverb such as *le* lit. ‘down’, which actually results in a change of argument structure, transitivity of the verb. Sentence (i) would be ungrammatical without an object. In this case a second person object is also possible with the meaning ‘overtake, run faster than’ ((ii), we are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for the example).

(i) *Le-fut-ott-ák *(a három kör-t)*
 PV-RUN-PST-3PL.DEF the three lap-ACC
 ‘They have run the three laps (that they were supposed to).’

which Csirmaz (2008: 169) calls situation delimiters, typically express manner and measurement. No second person pronoun is likely to appear in such a role.

- (2) V + DP_{egyet}⁵
- a. Péter fut/*fut-ja.
Peter run.INDEF/run-DEF
'Peter is running.'
- b. Péter fut/*fut-ja egy kör-t.
Peter run.INDEF/run-DEF a lap-ACC
'Peter is running a lap.'
- c. Péter *fut/fut-ja az utolsó kör-t.
Peter run.INDEF/run-DEF the last lap-ACC
'Peter is running the last lap.'

2.3 Verbs with an infinitival complement alternating with an object DP: [+DEF +LAK]

The sentences in (3) show one of the possible patterns with a verb taking an infinitival complement clause. The verb *akar* 'want' agrees with the accusative marked arguments of the embedded infinitival clause in exactly the same way as was seen in the sentences in (1) and (2). Both definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement (3d) are obligatory, even when the infinitive takes an accusative adjunct (3e). Finally, (3f) shows that the verb *akar* can take a DP object as well.

- (3) V + V_{INF,OBJ} (+ DP_{ACC})
- a. Péter akar/*akar-ja fut-ni.
Peter want.INDEF/want-DEF run-INF
'Peter wants to run.'
- b. Péter akar/*akar-ja néz-ni egy film-et.
Peter want.INDEF/akar-DEF watch-INF a film-ACC
'Peter wants to watch a film.'

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- (ii) *Simán le-fut-lak száz-on.*
easily PV-run-LAK hundred-SUPE
'I can easily outrun you in the 100 meters.'

5. The DP_{egyet} in (2) has been chosen as the representative of this kind of adjunct. The constituent *egyet* literally translates into one-ACC, resulting in an aspectually slightly different meaning, something close to the English *He had a run*. Also, *egy* can appear together with manner-type modification, such as *egy jó-t* 'one/a good-ACC', in which case it is the adjective that carries accusative case.

- (i) *Fut-ott-ak egy jó-t.*
run-PST-3PL a good-ACC
'They had a good run.'

- c. Péter *akar/akar-ja néz-ni a film-et.
Peter want.INDEF/want-DEF watch-INF the film-ACC
'Peter wants to watch the film.'
- d. (Én) akar-lak/*akar-ok/*akar-om meglátogat-ni (téged).
I want-LAK/akar-INDEF/akar-DEF visit-INF you.ACC
'I want to visit you.'
- e. Péter *akar/akar-ja fut-ni az utolsó kör-t.
Peter want.INDEF/akar-DEF run-INF the last lap-ACC
'Peter wants to run the last lap.'
- f. Péter akar egy könyv-et.
Peter want.INDEF a book-ACC
'Peter wants a book.'

The fact that these verbs need an expletive DP in the accusative case when they take a finite clause (if they do), indicates that these verbs are indeed associated with an object position (4). Variation along these lines depends on potential obviation effects and factivity among others.

- (4) Péter az-t akar-ja, hogy Mari vegyen egy könyv-et.
Peter that-ACC want-DEF that mari buy.SUBJ a book-ACC
'Peter wants Mary to buy a book.'

Based on these data, we refer to the infinitival complements of such verbs as infinitival objects. Although some of the verbs showing this behaviour have no matching DP and/or finite clause objects, we nevertheless identify them as belonging to this group based on the fact that they show the same pattern, and we take the lack of a DP object as resulting from lexical restrictions. These verbs are very few in number, and, apart from Kenesei's (2001) auxiliaries, include verbs such as *bír* 'can' and *mer* 'dare', which are also auxiliary-like though not identified as such by Kenesei.

2.4 Verbs with a non-object infinitival complement: [-DEF ±LAK]

Another verb, *készül* 'prepare' takes an infinitival agreement, but shows an unexpected pattern. It does not agree in definiteness with the object of its infinitival complement – it is the indefinite form that is used throughout. LAK-agreement, however, is optionally possible, as shown in (5c), where indefinite agreement alternates with LAK-agreement in a sentence with a first person singular subject and a second person object.

- (5) V + V_{INF, NON-OBJ} (+ DP_{ACC})
a. Péter készül/*készül-i fut-ni.
Peter prepare.INDEF/prepare-DEF run-INF
'Peter is preparing to run.'

- b. Péter készül/*készül-i néz-ni egy/a film-et.⁶
 Peter prepare.INDEF/prepare-DEF watch-INF a/the film-ACC
 'Peter is preparing to watch a/the film.'
- c. (Én) készül-lek/készül-ök/*készül-öm
 I prepare-LAK/prepare-INDEF/prepare-DEF
 meglátogat-ni (téged).
 visit-INF you.ACC
 'I am preparing to visit you.'
- d. Péter készül/*készül-i fut-ni az utolsó kör-t.
 Peter prepare.INDEF/prepare-DEF run-INF the last lap-ACC
 'Peter is preparing to run the last lap.'
- e. Péter készül az eljegyzés-re
 Peter prepare.INDEF the engagement-SUBL
 'Peter is preparing for the engagement.'

These are crucial data for the present study, indicating that definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement have different syntactic derivations. The main aim of our paper is to offer an account of this particular difference in the behaviour of the two agreement types. In order to do so, we capitalize on the difference between the selectional restrictions of the groups of verbs in question: while *akar*-type verbs take object DPs, *készül*-type verbs have no accusative arguments. Instead, they either take complements with oblique case forms, which for *készül* happens to be sublative (5e), or they have no complements at all. This difference shows a correlation with the availability of definiteness vs. LAK-agreement. Observationally, it can be stated that definiteness agreement is possible when the selecting verb can also take an object DP. When the selecting verb takes a complement in oblique case or is intransitive, LAK-agreement is possible for most of the speakers. This indicates that LAK-agreement is not restricted to accusative environments.

Similarly to what we saw at the end of the discussion of verbs belonging to group 3, sentences containing *készül*-type verbs take a finite clause introduced by

6. Bárány (2017) actually argues that these sentences are grammatical with definiteness agreement as well for some speakers. The grammaticality of the forms with definiteness agreement improves spectacularly in the presence of focus (i), for a detailed discussion see (Bárány 2017). The proposal made there seems compatible with our locality-based approach.

(i) András BUDAPEST-ET készül/készül-i meglátogat-ni.
 András Budapest-ACC prepare.INDEF/prepare-DEF visit-INF
 'It is Budapest that András is preparing to visit.'

an expletive DP in the oblique case form associated with the verb in question, in this case sublativ (6).

- (6) *Péter ar-ra készül, hogy megnéz-i a film-et.*
 Peter that-SUBL prepare.INDEF that watch-DEF the film-ACC
 'Peter is preparing to watch the film.'

The infinitival clauses appearing in these sentences carry the non-object infinitive label in this paper.

Actually, the grammaticality judgements regarding this case are even more subtle. For a small group of speakers, definite agreement with verbs like *készül* 'prepare' is also possible, though, similarly to LAK-agreement, not obligatory. The really interesting cases, however, are still the patterns used by the majority of the speakers shown in (5), with definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement parting ways and behaving differently (see also fn6 for the role of focus in these constructions).

2.5 Non-agreeing patterns with infinitival complements: [-DEF -LAK]

Though also selecting non-object infinitives, certain verbs such as *neki-lát* 'begin, lit. PV-see', *próbálkozik* 'try'⁷ (7) and *látszik* 'seem' (8) do not show either type of agreement for the majority of the speakers. Again, for a small group of speakers, definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement are optionally possible.

- (7) V + V_{INFINON-OBJ} (+ DP_{ACC})
 a. *Péter próbál-kozik/*próbál-koz-za fut-ni.*⁸
 Peter try-KOZIK.INDEF/try-KOZIK.DEF run-INF
 'Peter is trying to run.'
 b. *Péter próbál-kozik/*próbál-koz-za néz-ni egy/a film-et.*
 Peter try-KOZIK.INDEF/try-KOZIK-DEF watch-INF a/the film-ACC
 'Peter is trying to watch a/the film.'

7. The case of *próbálkozik* 'try' is all the more interesting as there exists a morphologically simpler verb meaning 'try' in Hungarian: *próbál*. This verb behaves like *akar* 'want' discussed under the examples in (3) in every relevant aspect discussed in this paper, suggesting that morphological complexity also plays a role. For further details see the discussion in Section 3.3. To account for this kind of speaker variation, identified as problematic by one of our reviewers, we propose that it is the result of different processes of lexicalization. Speakers for whom there is no difference between *próbál* and *próbálkozik* lexicalize the more complex form as an unanalyzed unit, disregarding its internal morphological complexity.

8. For more details concerning the nature of the *-kozik* suffix, see Section 3.3. The *-ik* ending drops when further suffixes are added to the verb.

- c. (Én) **próbál-koz-lak/próbál-koz-om/próbál-koz-ok*
 I try-KOZIK-LAK/try-KOZIK-INDEF/try-KOZIK-INDEF
*fölhív-ni (téged).*⁹
 call-INF you.ACC
 'I am trying to call you.'
- (8) a. *A lányok megoldá-ni látsza-nak/*látsz-szák egy/a problémá-t.*
 the girls solve-INF seem-INDEF/seem-DEF a/the problem-ACC
 'The girls seem to be solving a/the problem.'
- b. (Én) *fölhív-ni *látsz-ott-alak/*látsz-ott-am (téged).*
 I call-INF seem-PST-LAK/seem-PST-DEF/INDEF you.ACC
 'I seemed to be calling you.'

2.6 Verbs with an infinitival adjunct: [-DEF -LAK]

Finally, in (9), we can see another pattern that is ungrammatical either with definiteness agreement or LAK-agreement for all the speakers of Hungarian. When the infinitival clause is an adjunct, either form of agreement is ruled out, even for those speakers who otherwise accept optional definiteness or LAK-agreement in groups 4 and 5.

- (9) V + V_{INF,ADJ} (+ DP_{ACC})
- a. *Péter leül/*leül-i pihen-ni.*
 Peter sit.INDEF/sit-DEF rest-INF
 'Peter sits down to rest.'
- b. *Péter leül/*leül-i néz-ni egy/a film-et.*
 Peter sit.INDEF/sit-DEF watch-INF a/the film-ACC
 'Peter sits down to watch a/the film.'
- c. (Én) **leül-lek/leül-ök/*leül-öm kikérdez-ni (téged).*
 I sit-LAK/sit-INDEF/sit-DEF ask-INF you.ACC
 'I sit down to ask you.'

2.7 Speaker variation

Let us consider the details of speaker variation now: we have identified three groups of speakers. What they share is that definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement

9. In first person singular forms of *-ik* verbs, the verbal suffix of indefinite agreement is the same as the definite form. Today it is rather the result of a prescriptive rule with more and more speakers actually using the regular indefinite form as well, hence the acceptability of both forms (as opposed to -LAK, which is clearly ungrammatical). We regard both forms as indefinite in these cases.

are obligatory in the first three verb types (LAK-agreement being excluded due to independent reasons for verb type 2), but both are prohibited in infinitival adjunct clauses. We find variation in the judgement of verb types 4 and 5: there is no definiteness agreement for the majority of the speakers, with LAK-agreement possible only for verb type 4. In the second group, LAK-agreement is also possible for type 5 verbs, but definiteness agreement is still excluded for both. For members of group 3, definiteness agreement can also optionally appear on the matrix verb as well as LAK-agreement. In general, it can be concluded that definiteness agreement is more restricted than LAK-agreement, with the exception of group 3 speakers, where the two pattern together.

Table 2 summarizes our findings, where group 1 represents the judgements of the majority of the speakers.

Table 2. Speaker variation in object agreement ('+': obligatory; '-': prohibited; '±': optional)

Speaker	Agreement	Verb types					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Group 1	DEF	+	+	+	-	-	-
	LAK	+	n.a.	+	±	-	-
Group 2	DEF	+	+	+	-	-	-
	LAK	+	n.a.	+	±	±	-
Group 3	DEF	+	+	+	±	-	-
	LAK	+	n.a.	+	±	±	-

From now on, we focus on the most productive pattern, that of group 1. A natural explanation for the other variants will then fall out of our proposal as well.

3. The proposal

3.1 A locality-based hierarchy of verbs based on patterns of object agreement

We propose that the differences between the constructions above can be accounted for by assuming a locality-based scale. At one end of this scale we find verbs selecting an object, the most local relationship between a verb and the accusative marked constituent that it agrees with. In this case no difference between definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement can be detected potentially leading to

the conclusion that the two result from the same syntactic processes, as claimed in Bárány (2015), who studies object agreement in simple sentences only. At the other end of the scale, we have verbs with infinitival adjuncts, where no form of agreement ever arises. Between the two ends of the scale, we find the rest of the patterns with a decreasing level in the locality of the agreement relations as described in Table 3. That definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement are not the same is shown by the verbs belonging to group 4, which do not have definiteness agreement forms, but can nevertheless show LAK-agreement.

The list of verbs taking infinitival complements in Table 3 is based on Kálmán *et. al* (1989), excluding object control verbs and verbs taking inflected infinitives but not showing person and number agreement themselves. The verbs marked with a star in groups 3 and 4 have no matching object or oblique DP variants.

Agreement between an intransitive verb and an accusative adjunct is still within a local domain. LAK-agreement, as pointed out in Section 2.2, is not attested for reasons to do with semantics. As we have seen, the shared property of the verbs in the third item on the scale is that they take infinitival complements that alternate with a DP object (10), or they are auxiliaries of the Hungarian language.

- (10) a. *Szeretné-m megven-ni ezt a könyv-et.*
 would.like-DEF buy-INF this the book-ACC
 'I would like this book.'
- b. *Szeretné-m ezt a könyv-et.*
 would.like-DEF this the book-ACC
 'I would like to buy this book'

The patterns that are in need of an explanation (which are also subject to native speaker variation indicating a degree of uncertainty in the grammars) are those that contain matrix verbs that take infinitival clauses not alternating with a DP object. These come in two groups: one with a verb taking the infinitive as a non-object complement like *készül* 'prepare', showing only LAK-agreement discussed in 2.4, and the other containing verbs like *látszik* 'seem' and *próbálkozik* 'try', not showing either agreement pattern as described in 2.5. The latter are expected to behave on a par with *készül*-type verbs, since they share the property of not selecting an object infinitive with them. However, there is a property members of this group share as opposed to *készül*-type verbs: the complexity of their morphological/syntactic structure, which turns out to play a role in their syntactic behaviour.

Finally, in order to complete this part of the discussion, let us turn to type 6 verbs. To account for the lack of object agreement with objects appearing in infinitival adjunct clauses, all that needs to be pointed out is that adjunct clauses

Table 3. The locality-based hierarchy of verbs based on patterns of object agreement

Verb type	Verbs belonging to the given verb type	Agreement pattern	
		DEF	LAK
1. V + DP _{ACC} DP object	<i>néz</i> 'watch'	+	+
2. V + DP _{egyet} Intransitive verb with accusative adjunct	<i>fut</i> 'run', <i>alszik</i> 'sleep'	+	?
3. V + V _{inf} (+ DP _{ACC}) Infinitival object complement	<i>fog*</i> 'will', <i>szokott*</i> 'usually does', <i>talál*</i> 'happen to', <i>akar</i> 'want', <i>(meg)próbál</i> 'try', <i>(el)kezd</i> 'begin', <i>bír*</i> 'can', <i>elfelejt</i> 'forget', <i>gyűlöl</i> 'hate', <i>imád</i> 'adore', <i>kíván</i> 'wish', <i>megkísérel</i> 'attempt', <i>(meg)tanul</i> 'learn', <i>mer*</i> 'dare', <i>óhajt</i> 'wish', <i>sajnál</i> 'regret', <i>szégyell</i> 'be ashamed', <i>szeret</i> 'like', <i>szeretne</i> 'would like', <i>tanul</i> 'learn', <i>tud</i> 'can', <i>un</i> 'be bored', <i>utál</i> 'hate'	+	+
4. V + V _{inf} (+ DP _{ACC}) Infinitival non-object complement	<i>készül</i> 'prepare', <i>fél</i> 'be afraid', <i>habozik*</i> 'hesitate', ADJ + <i>lesz/volt</i> ¹⁰ 'ADJ + be.FUT/be.PAST', <i>igyekszik</i> 'does one's best', <i>iparkodik</i> 'work hard', <i>jön*</i> '(aspectual) come', <i>kényszerül</i> 'be compelled to', <i>megy*</i> '(aspectual) go', <i>szándékozik*</i> 'intend', <i>vágyik</i> 'desire', <i>vonakodik*</i> 'hesitate'	-	±
5. V + V _{inf} (+ DP _{ACC}) Infinitival non-object complement	<i>próbálkozik</i> 'try (hard)', <i>látszik</i> 'seem', ADJ + <i>van</i> 'ADJ + be.PRES', <i>neki-lát</i> 'begin, lit. PV.see, see to' (together with a great number of other clitic-like preverb-verb combinations meaning begin: <i>hozzá-fog</i> , <i>neki-ül</i> , etc.)	-	-
6. V + V _{inf} (+ DP _{ACC}) Infinitival adjunct		-	-

10. Interestingly, adjectives appearing with the copula show sensitivity to tense: the present form belongs to group 5 (no agreement), whereas the past and future forms show the group 4 pattern, where LAK-agreement is possible (ia). This corresponds to the observation that lexical verbs also show more willingness to bear LAK-agreement in the past tense (ib). We assume the reasons are morphological in nature: the defectivity of the verbal paradigm.

- (i) a. (Én) *kénytelen volta-lak/lesz-lek/*vagy-lak*
I forced was-LAK/be.FUT-LAK/be.PRES-LAK
megbüntet-ni (téged).
punish-INF you.ACC
'I had/will have/have no choice but to punish you.'
- b. (Én) *jöttem-lek/*jön-lek meglátogat-ni (téged).*
I come.PAST-LAK/come.PRES-LAK visit-INF you.ACC
'I came/am coming to see you.'

are islands; as opposed to infinitival complement clauses, they are not transparent domains, so agreement between the finite verb and the object of an infinitival adjunct clause is not possible. This is different from what we find in simple sentences containing what Csirmaz (2008) calls accusative adjuncts, where the verb and the adjunct are in the same domain making agreement possible. We focus on infinitival complement clauses in the rest of the paper, that is verb types 3–5.

Of course these verb types may turn out to need further refinement. Type 3 verbs include the three verbs that Kenesei (2001) identifies as the auxiliaries of Hungarian (*fog* ‘will’, *szokott* ‘usually does’, and *talál* ‘happen to’). If locality is the main factor in establishing the different classes, an even closer connection between the matrix verbs and the infinitival object can be assumed, and then this group can appear as a separate category between groups 1 and 3. Similarly to this, the verbs *jön* ‘come’ and *megy* ‘go’, identified as aspectual auxiliaries when taking infinitival complements (e.g. Den Dikken 2004), may turn out to form a separate class. Responding to a reviewer’s remark asking for further clarification regarding why they are different from verbs taking adjunct purpose clauses, we emphasise the semi-auxiliary status of these verbs. Under such an assumption we also account for why verbs with similar semantics but with richer content are ruled out. Whereas *jön* ‘come’ results in well-formed sentences with LAK-agreement, if a manner (*siet* ‘hurry’) or direction (*vissza-jön* ‘come back’) component is added to this verb, the result is a sharp decrease in the grammaticality judgements.

3.2 What multiple infinitival constructions show us

In order to be able to account for the patterns found in the infinitival constructions in verb types 3, 4 and 5, we must first consider the nature of object agreement across infinitival clause boundaries. As pointed out before, simple sentences disguise some of the processes taking place in object agreement. Multiple infinitival constructions reveal some further properties of the phenomenon.

We have seen already that LAK-agreement has a different distribution from definiteness agreement: it is possible without the verb subcategorizing for an accusative argument, so it is likely to require an account different from definiteness agreement, which presupposes an argument position where accusative case can be checked. When it comes to agreement phenomena, we can choose one of the following alternatives: (i) direct one step agreement also called long distance agreement between the finite verb and the object of the infinitive; (ii) direct cyclic agreement with the definiteness features of the object recursively moving from object position to object position; (iii) indirect agreement transmitted by a constituent different from the object DP. Our underlying assumption is that, in order to account for the differences observed, different routes of agreement should be

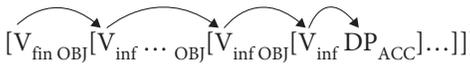
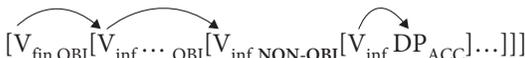
considered: if definiteness agreement is direct, then LAK-agreement may turn out to be indirect, and vice versa. Both patterns can be indirect if case transmission can be shown to be carried out using different means. It is these options we are going to consider in the following sections, starting with the discussion of definiteness agreement.

3.2.1 Definiteness agreement in multiple infinitival constructions

Szécsényi and Szécsényi (2016, 2017) discuss definiteness agreement in multiple infinitival constructions, concluding that definiteness agreement proceeds in a cyclic manner from clause to clause. This claim is based on the observation that a non-agreeing infinitive, such as *készül* ‘prepare’ in (11c) blocks further agreement.

- (11) a. *Péter fog/*fog-ja akar-ni néz-ni egy film-et.*
 Peter will.INDEF/will-DEF want-INF watch-INF a film-ACC
 ‘Peter will want to watch a film.’
- b. *Péter *fog/fog-ja akar-ni néz-ni a film-et.*
 Peter will.INDEF/will-DEF want-INF watch-INF the film-ACC
 ‘Peter will want to watch the film.’
- c. *Péter fog/*fog-ja készül-ni néz-ni egy/a film-et.*
 Peter will.INDEF/will-DEF prepare-INF watch-INF a/the film-ACC
 ‘Peter will prepare to watch a/the film.’

To explain these data Szécsényi and Szécsényi (2016, 2017) assume that the verbs selecting an infinitival complement do not directly agree with the accusative DP of the most embedded infinitive but by virtue of agreeing with the definiteness value of the infinitival clause directly selected by them. Definiteness then is constructed as a value that spreads from infinitival clause to infinitival clause via the transmission of the infinitival verbs in a cyclic manner. This means that the infinitive itself has a definiteness feature, and this is what the selecting verb checks. Non-agreeing verbs block definiteness agreement because they cannot check, and for this reason, cannot transmit the definiteness feature appearing on the infinitive they select (12b). What follows from this is that the infinitival clause is actually the object of the selecting verb, which needs to check a definiteness feature in a strictly local domain.

- (12) a. 
- b. 

3.2.2 LAK-agreement in multiple infinitival constructions

Turning to LAK-agreement in multiple infinitival constructions not discussed previously, we find a more refined pattern: in a multiple infinitival construction where the most embedded verb takes an object DP as a complement, and the selecting verbs alternate with an object DP, LAK-agreement can also proceed up until it reaches the matrix finite verb. In this case, LAK-agreement is obligatory (13a). In (13b), there is an infinitival verb in the middle that can optionally LAK-agree with the object, so we find optional LAK-agreement on the finite verb. In (13c), we have a type 5 verb, which has a blocking effect on agreement, so only indefinite agreement is grammatical.¹¹

- (13) a. (Én) *fog-lak/*fog-ok/*fog-om* *akar-ni* *meglátogat-ni* (*téged*).
 I will-LAK/will-INDEF/will-DEF want-INF visit-INF you.ACC
 'I will want to visit you.'
- b. (Én) *fog-lak/fog-ok/*fog-om* *készül-ni*
 I will-LAK/will-INDEF/will-DEF prepare-INF
meglátogat-ni (*téged*).
 visit-INF you.ACC
 'I will prepare to visit you.'
- c. (Én) **fog-lak/fog-ok/*fog-om* *próbál-köz-ni*
 I will-LAK/will-INDEF/will-DEF try-KOZIK-INF
meglátogat-ni (*téged*).
 visit-INF you.ACC
 'I will try to visit you.'

Based on these data, the following picture emerges for verb types 3, 4 and 5: when a verb taking an infinitival complement alternates with a DP object, both definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement are obligatory (type 3), and both are transmitted further onto the matrix clause. Definiteness agreement is not possible when the verb takes an infinitival complement that is not an object, but LAK-agreement is optionally possible (type 4), and the transmission of agreement takes place accordingly: LAK-agreement can, but does not have to appear on the matrix verb. For the majority of speakers, neither agreement type is possible for type 5 verbs. As (13c) indicates, even LAK-agreement is blocked by *próbálkozni* 'to try'.

These observations suggest that LAK-agreement is also cyclic in nature, as it is also affected by the infinitive in the middle. However, the differences between (11c) and (13b) with *készül* 'prepare' not showing definiteness agreement (11c),

11. Of course, the judgements of speakers who treat *készül* 'prepare' and *próbálkozik* 'try-KOZIK' on a par (speakers of group 2 and 3), are going to be as in (13b) for *próbálkozik* as well.

but showing LAK-agreement (13b), indicate that we are dealing with different syntactic processes.

Now we are in the position to discuss an important difference between definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement. As we saw in (10), definiteness agreement between a matrix verb and the object of an embedded infinitive goes together with the possibility of definiteness agreement between the matrix verb and an object of its own. However, when the infinitives in type 4 sentences alternate with an oblique complement, a similar LAK-agreement between the matrix verb and the selected oblique second person complement is impossible (14b). The verb *fél* 'be afraid of sg' takes an ablative complement; it has no version that selects an accusative DP.¹² Still, sentence (14a), showing LAK-agreement with the object of the infinitive, is grammatical. In (14c), we can see a clear contrast with (10b): an accusative complement is excluded in (14c); nevertheless, LAK-agreement is not ruled out between the finite verb and the object of its infinitival complement. One of the main questions of the present paper is how LAK-agreement can be made independent of accusative case assignment.

- (14) a. (*Én*) *fél-te-lek* *meglátogat-ni* (*téged*)
 I be.afraid-PAST-LAK visit-INF you.ACC
 'I was afraid to visit you.'
- b. (*Én*) **fél-te-lek/fél-t-em* *tőled*.
 I be.afraid-PAST-LAK/be.afraid-PAST-INDEF you.ABL
 'I was afraid of you.'
- c. (*Én*) **fél-lek/*fél-ek/*fél-em* (*téged*).
 I be.afraid-LAK/be.afraid-INDEF/be.afraid-DEF you.ACC

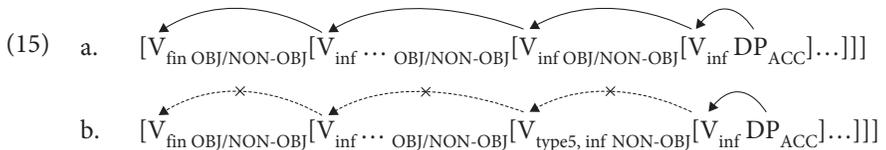
What this indicates is that in the case of LAK-agreement the infinitive is not the object of the selecting verb, and for this reason, the matrix verb is unable to check either a definiteness or a LAK feature on the infinitive. The features of the embedded infinitival object are obviously checked in these constructions, but this checking procedure must then take place differently.

As a result, our conclusion regarding the cyclicity of LAK-agreement needs to be refined: the data show that LAK-agreement also proceeds from infinitival clause to infinitival clause. The selecting verb, however, cannot check the respective features of the infinitival clause, as it only takes an oblique complement. The agreement process therefore has to be triggered by the second person object pronoun of the embedded infinitive, and when its features end up in the same domain as the

12. The verb *fél* 'be afraid' used to be able to have an accusative argument, which is shown e.g. in the archaic expression *fél-i az isten-t* 'fear God'. Its use is not productive in present day Hungarian.

first person singular subject, the local configuration required for LAK-agreement is established (first person singular subject combining with second person object). The infinitives must have a transmitting role, as we have seen in (13); without the presence of the infinitive LAK-agreement is impossible.¹³ The contribution of the infinitive lies in providing the second person object to the sentence.

The pattern in (15a) shows how LAK-agreement proceeds from clause to clause. In the case of type 5 verbs, it is this kind of agreement that is blocked, as shown in (15b).



The direction of agree is spectacularly different in (12) and (15). Whereas in (12), we can see a garden variety process of Agree with a probe targeting a goal, either the DP or the infinitival object of the verb, in (15) the search begins in the lower domains.

3.3 What is responsible for the blocking effect in type 5 verbs?

The property shared by verbs belonging to types 4 and 5 is that they take infinitival complements that do not alternate with an accusative DP object. Type 5 verbs are morphologically more complex, and in this section, we consider the syntactic consequences of this complexity.

The verb *látszik* ‘seem’ can be identified as the unaccusative pair of the verb *lát* ‘see’, as illustrated in (16). This means that the subject of the sentence containing

13. Infinitives themselves never have a LAK-agreement form in Standard Hungarian in spite of productive inflected infinitival patterns. Data mentioned in Grétsy (2008), however, suggest an account similar to what we proposed for definiteness agreement, where the definiteness feature moves from infinitival clause to infinitival clause. What (i) shows is that LAK-agreement can optionally appear on the infinitive in very informal spoken registers. However, it is only possible in constructions where the infinitive can be otherwise inflected for the person and number properties of the infinitival subject. (For more details on inflected infinitives see Tóth 2000.)

- (i) a. *szólj, ha föl kell segíte-ne-lek.*
 call if up have.to help-INF-LAK
 ‘Call me if I have to help you up.’ (Grétsy 2008)
- b. *szabad megkér-ne-lek ar-ra, hogy...?*
 possible ask-INF-LAK that-SUBL that(= comp)
 ‘May I ask you to...?’ (Grétsy 2008)

látszik originates from a VP-internal position, where object agreement takes place. Since this position is occupied by the trace of *Mari*, LAK-agreement is blocked. The verb *lát* can also take an infinitival complement, but it is an object control verb with its own object DP, so it never agrees with the object of its infinitive.

- (16) a. *Péter lát-ja Mari-t.*
 Peter see-DEF mary-ACC
 ‘Peter sees Mary.’
- a’. *Mari_i látszik t_i.*
 Mary seem.INDEF
 ‘Mary can be seen.’
- b. *Péter lát-ja Mari-t elmen-ni.*
 Peter see-DEF Mary-ACC leave-INF
 ‘Peter sees Mary leave.’
- b’. *Mari_i látszik t_i elmen-ni.*
 Mary seem.INDEF leave-INF
 ‘Mary seems to be leaving.’

The morphological complexity of the verb *látszik* ‘seem’ reflects that *látszik* is derivationally related to the transitive verb *lát* ‘see’. Out of the two arguments of *lát*, the internal argument is preserved, which functions as the subject of *látszik*. It results in the presence of two internal argument positions, a DP and an infinitival clause with the DP position occupied by the trace of the moved object (16a’).¹⁴ This DP object blocks agreement with other potential candidates in the infinitival clause.

This fits into a more general pattern of intervention effects: multiple internal arguments also have a similar blocking effect elsewhere, as in dative control constructions such as (17).

- (17) *(Én) segít-ek/*segíte-lek Mari-nak meggyőz-ni téged.*
 I help-INDEF/help-LAK Mari-DAT persuade-INF you.ACC
 ‘I help Mary persuade you.’

As for *próbál-kozik* ‘try-KOZIK’, attention can be drawn to the morphological marker shared by this verb and reflexive forms of transitive verbs. In (18), we can

14. In order to respond to a remark made by one of our reviewers, we wish to highlight the fact that Hungarian *látszik* ‘can be seen’ is not an equivalent of English *seem*, where we indeed have strong arguments for a subject-to-subject raising analysis. Notice that the Hungarian verb can have a structural subject without an embedded infinitive which we claim originates from an internal argument position (see 16a–a’). In English, such a construction is ruled out: **Mary seems*. The implicit claim made in (16) is that the structural subject undergoes subject-to-object-to-subject raising in the infinitival sentence.

see two ways of expressing reflexive meanings, one using the reflexive pronoun *magá-t* ‘self-ACC’, the other using the verbal reflexivizer morpheme *-kozik*, the same ending on the verb meaning ‘try’.¹⁵

- (18) a. *Péter borotvál-ja magá-t.*
 Peter shave-DEF self-ACC
 ‘Peter is shaving himself.’
- a’. *Péter borotvál-kozik.*
 Peter shave-KOZIK.INDEF
 ‘Peter is shaving himself.’
- b. *Péter próbál elmen-ni.*
 Peter try.INDEF leave-INF
 ‘Peter is trying to leave.’
- b’. *Péter próbál-kozik elmen-ni.*
 Peter try-KOZIK.INDEF leave-INF
 ‘Peter is trying to leave’

We argue that the reflexive morpheme leads to an intervention effect¹⁶ similar to the one we saw for *látszik* ‘seem’ above, hence object agreement is not possible. The pattern that seems to emerge for LAK-agreement is that it is always possible between a matrix verb and the object of its infinitival complement, unless it is blocked by overt or covert intervening phrase-sized constituents occupying an internal argument position.

Regarding *neki-lát* ‘begin’, (lit. ‘PV-see’), and similar preverb-verb combinations typically meaning ‘begin’, our account capitalizes on the pronominal nature of the preverb and the fact that these verbs take arguments sharing the case form

15. This particular verb form is interesting from a cross-linguistic perspective as well. As pointed out by Medová (2009), the addition of reflexive morphemes can also result in what she calls an effort reading. The verb form *próbál-kozik* ‘try’ seems to offer further confirmation of her observations, though this use of the reflexive morpheme is clearly more productive in Czech. For more parallels between reflexivity and LAK-agreement, see Szécsényi and Szécsényi (2019).

16. One of our reviewers points out that the *-kozik* suffix in *próbálkozik* ‘try’ is not reflexive at all, but a tentative-frequentative one. While we agree that it is not strictly speaking reflexive, we maintain that even in this case there is a hidden reflexive/antipassive meaning, something like ‘engage oneself in doing something,’ and we are not dealing with a case of accidental homonymy. Differences in the argument structure of *próbál* ‘try’ taking accusative objects and *próbálkozik* ‘try-KOZIK’ taking an instrumental complement and ruling out an accusative one can also be taken as supporting such an approach. In general, we take the *-kozik* suffix as an indicator of an unavailable internal argument position.

appearing on the preverb.¹⁷ In these cases, the preverb shows an argument clitic-like behaviour. In order to understand this, the reader needs to be aware that the morpheme *neki* appearing in our example is the same form as the dative third person pronoun in Hungarian. Having said this, let us turn to the examples in (19). (19a) shows the pattern of a simple sentence with the dative clitic preverb encoding the case form of the selected argument. Since the argument is not an accusative object, definite agreement is not an option. In (19b), we have an embedded infinitive with a definite object, but definiteness agreement is ungrammatical for the same reason: *neki-lát* does not take an object, so it does not agree with any. In (19c), we can see a LAK-agreement example, which is ungrammatical. Again, for those speakers who find this sentence grammatical, the verb is possibly an unanalyzed unit (see fn. 6).

- (19) a. *Péter neki-lát-ott/*neki-lát-ta* a *házi feladat-nak*.
 Peter PV-see-PST.INDEF/PV-see-PAST.DEF the home task-DAT
 ‘Peter started the homework.’
- b. *Péter neki-lát-ott/*neki-lát-ta* *lerajzol-ni Mari-t*.
 Peter PV-see-PST.INDEF/PV-see-PST.DEF draw-INF Mari-ACC
 ‘Peter started to draw Mary.’
- c. **(Én) neki-lát-ta-lak lerajzol-ni (téged)*.
 I PV-see-PST-LAK draw-INF you.ACC
 ‘I started to draw you.’

Note that in the case of other preverb-verb combinations, we do not find the same pattern: when the matrix verb is *el-kezd* ‘PV(= away)-begin’ LAK-agreement (20a), moreover, even definiteness agreement turns out to be fully grammatical (20b). This is actually predicted by our proposal. Notice that in these sentences, the preverb is not clitic-like; it is a pure adverbial without a pronominal use, and the verbal expression actually takes an accusative DP complement as well (20c). What this means is that the infinitive is an object infinitive, and in this case, the blocking effects do not apply, since the transitive matrix verb needs to check the respective object features on the selected infinitival object.

- (20) a. *(Én) el-kezde-lek/*el-kezd-em/*el-kezd-ek*
 I PV-begin-LAK/PV-begin-DEF/PV-begin-INDEF
követ-ni (téged).
 follow-INF you.ACC
 ‘I began to follow you.’

17. For more information on this construction see Kálmán and Trón (2000).

- b. *Péter el-kezd-te/*el-kezd-ett* követ-ni Mari-t.
 Péter PV-begin-PST.DEF/PV-begin-PST.INDEF follow-INF Mari-ACC
 ‘Peter began to follow Mary.’
- c. *Péter el-kezd-te/*el-kezd-ett* az iskolá-t.
 Péter PV-begin-PST.DEF/PV-begin-PST.INDEF the school-ACC
 ‘Peter started school.’

To summarize, in different ways, agreement is blocked by a matrix constituent in sentences with type 5 verbs. It is the trace of *Mari* in the case of *látszik* ‘seem’, the reflexive morpheme in the case of *próbálkozik* ‘try-kozik’, and the clitic-like preverb for *neki-lát* ‘begin’ (lit. ‘PV-see’).

In order to account for the variation among the speakers, we propose the following: for the majority of the speakers the distinction between object and non-object arguments results in a difference between the accessible patterns of agreement. Definiteness agreement is obligatory with a local nominal or infinitival object, but it is not possible anywhere else. Optional LAK-agreement is always possible, but can be blocked by intervening phrases. Group 2 speakers, for whom every sentence with an infinitival complement is grammatical with LAK-agreement, do not show sensitivity to morphological complexity; it does not translate into syntactic complexity, and the forms are treated as lexicalized, unanalyzed units. Those speakers for whom definiteness agreement is possible whenever LAK-agreement is possible do not distinguish the two types of agreement. Definiteness agreement follows the pattern of LAK-agreement in being obligatory when LAK-agreement is obligatory, and being optional when LAK-agreement is optional.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of the paper has been to account for the difference between the two patterns of object agreement attested in Hungarian, definiteness agreement, and person agreement in the presence of a first person singular subject and a second person object appearing on the verb in the form of a harmonizing LAK suffix. In reaching the conclusions listed below, we used sentences with matrix verbs taking an infinitival clause with its own object, occasionally with multiple layers of embedding. The reason that such data were particularly useful is that they made it possible to identify locality-based restrictions.

We claim that, while both definiteness agreement and LAK-agreement are cyclic in nature, they are not the result of the same syntactic operations. Our data indicate that agreement is not directly between the object of the infinitive and the matrix verb, but rather the intervening infinitives also play a role and can have a

blocking effect. Definiteness agreement is possible only across object infinitives, where the infinitive itself has been argued to be the locus of indirect cyclic agree. Non-object infinitives do not transmit definiteness, but they can transmit LAK-agreement. LAK-agree is possible in every infinitival complement clause, but it can be blocked by an intervening phrase associated with an internal argument position, indicating that the object of an infinitive LAK-agrees with the matrix verb in a more local domain.

The assumptions made in the paper also make it possible to account for variation among speakers. Questions left for future research include the reasons for the sensitivity of agreement to focus and tense, why LAK-agreement is optional in the case of non-object infinitives, and the exact nature and structural description of LAK-agreement.

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